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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

November 10, 2009

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius,

The Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health recently voted to unanimously approve Special Exposure Cohort petition 00152 for those who developed a range of cancers after working at the Hanford site from 1943 through 1972. I write to support the Board's decision and urge your timely approval of this important compensation benefit for Hanford workers and their families.

I supported the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) when it was first created in 2000. Nearly a decade later, I remain concerned about the pace at which claims are reviewed. For workers who developed an illness from their work, but for whom adequate records do not exist to document their exposure to radiation, EEOICPA's Special Exposure Cohort system creates a critical path to compensation.

Your approval of Special Exposure Cohort status for these Hanford workers would allow some, who have been unable to secure compensation due to deficiencies in the federal government's radiation exposure data, to begin receiving the recognition and compensation they deserve. These benefits are of great importance to my constituents and I appreciate your timely consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doc Hastings", written over a horizontal line.

Doc Hastings
Member of Congress